

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAL-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

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R 161915Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9081

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

INFO GOV PANCANAL

USCINCSO

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EO 11652 N/A

TAGS: PN PFOR

SUBJ: PANAMANIAN EXPRESS OPTIMISM OVER TREATY TALKS

SUMMARY. PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS, IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS AND IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS, CONTINUE TO EXPRESS OPTIMISM CONCERNING THE OUTCOME OF TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. FOREIGN MINISTER TACK MADE STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS CONCERNING THE CANAL ISSUE NOVEMBER 15 AT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN BOGOTA, EXPRESSING PANAMA'S APPRECIATION FOR THE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT THE FOREIGN MINISTERS WERE GIVING PANAMA. HE WAS QUOTED IN ALL PANAMA CITY DAILIES NOVEMBER 16 AS HAVING SAID THE CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS WOULD RESUME AT THE END OF THE MONTH, AND THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD WANTED TO REVISE THE 1903 TREATY WHEREAS PANAMA WANTED A NEW TREATY WHICH WOULD RECOGNIZE PANAMA'S "FULL JURISDICTION OVER THE CANAL" AND ELIMINATE THE PERPETUITY CLAUSE OF THE 1903 TREATY. PANAMA WOULD ACCEPT US ADMINISTRATION OVER THE CANAL, BUT NOT BEYOND THE END OF THE CENTURY. FULL PANAMANIAN JURISDICTION WOULD BE RETURNED BEFORE THE TERMINATION OF THE TREATY. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE US HAD SHOWN THE INCLINATIONS TO SIGN A NEW TREATY BUT AGREEMENT ON TERMS HAD NOT BEEN REACHED.

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2. TACK REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THERE WERE 14 MILITARY BASES IN THE

CANAL ZONE, SOME OF WHICH WERE TO TRAIN COUNTER-GUERRILLA FORCES, WHICH WERE A "VIOLATION OF PANAMA'S TERRITORY." HE ALSO ACCUSED THE US OF HAVING VIOLATED MANY CLAUSES OF THE 1903 TREATY.

3. INDEPENDENT LA ESTRELLA PUBLISHED AN AP ITEM NOVEMBER 16 REPORTING THAT TORRIJOS HAD TOLD A BUSINESS WEEK REPORTER THAT HE CONSIDERED IT "MOST PROBABLY" THAT A SOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE WITH THE US OVER THE CANAL WOULD BE ACHIEVED "NOW THAT THE NORTH AMERICAN NEGOTIATOR IS ELLSWORTH BUNKER."

4. COMMENT. EMBASSY OFFICERS IN CONVERSATIONS WITH PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN STRESSING THAT THE PURPOSE OF AMBASSADOR BUNKER'S FIRST VISIT WILL BE TO GET ACQUAINTED WITH PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS, VISIT THE CANAL AND MAKE A FIRST-HAND ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN PREPARATION FOR NEGOTIATING SESSIONS AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR. PANAMANIAN OFFICIALS CONSIDER THE FIRST VISIT "NEGOTIATIONS", AND THEIR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC REMARKS REFLECT OPTIMISM.

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